(d) As the Chit Fund companies are primarily regulated by the Registrar of Chits of State Governments, it is therefore, for the State Governments to give directions to Chit Fund companies.

Payment of salaries to staff of Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forests Plantation Corporation

1227. SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that matters pertaining to release of funds pertaining to salary and wages of the officers/staff of Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forest Plantation Corporation Ltd. to the tune of Rs. 6 crores is pending with his Ministry;

(b) if so, since when it is pending; and

(c) by when the decision is going to be taken so that salaries/wages to employees could be given?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (c) A proposal to grant a loan of Rs. 6 crore to Andaman and Nicobar Islands Forest Plantation Development Corporation Ltd. for payment of salary and wages has been included in Demand No. 30-Ministry of Environment and Forests, in the First Supplementary Demands for Grants, 2004-05 which has been laid on the Table of the House on 13th December, 2004 for consideration.

World Bank Aid to Nagaland

1228. SHRI T.R. ZELIANG: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of projects being executed in the State of Nagaland with the help of World Bank;

(b) the details of such projects and investment made therein; and

(c) the details of current position and such projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) A World Bank assisted project, the

Third Technical Education Project, is being implemented in a number of States including Nagaland. The World Bank has approved a credit amount of US$ 64.90 million for the project.

(c) The project has already disbursed an amount of US$ 26.72 million and is due to close on 30.6.2006.

Lending for agriculture Sector

1229. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that 18 per cent of the total lending of the Scheduled Commercial Banks has to be made for financing the agriculture sector;

(b) if so, whether this level of lending for agriculture sector has been achieved particularly in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra where the farmers community is facing worst financial crisis and most of the co-operative banks are in precarious condition;

(c) the details of the loans disbursed to farmers in the above three States through commercial/co-operative banks; and

(d) the measures taken to increase lending to farmers in the above three States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Public and External Debt

1230. SHRI MURLI DEORA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether public debt and external debt have been increasing since 1999-2000 and if so, the details thereof year-wise;

(b) the reasons for this increase and its effect on the economy and fiscal deficit;